

The  
NASA PEOPLE AT WORK  
Project

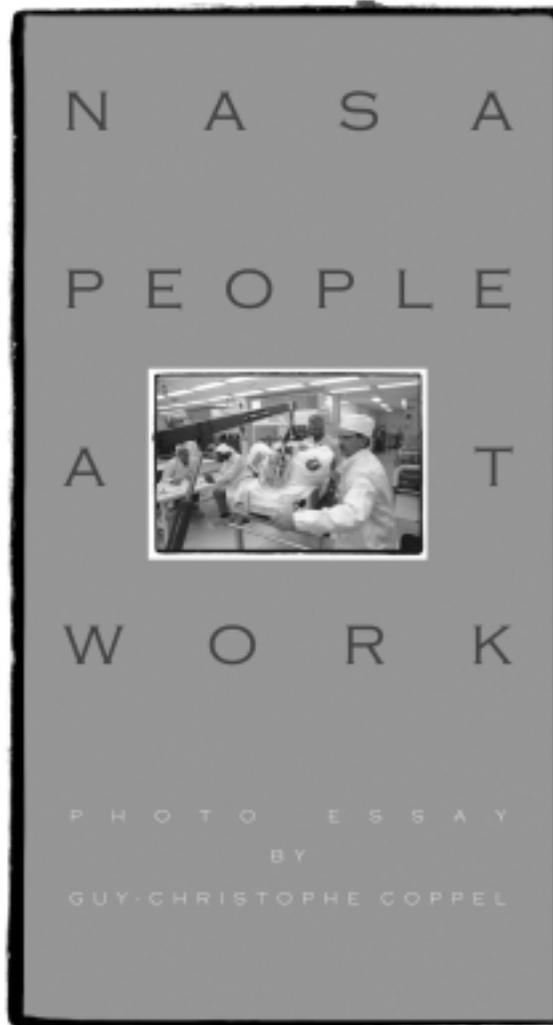
**“On Guy-Christophe Coppel...”**

By

**Gregory W. Hayes**

**Director of Human Resources and Education**

**NASA Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center**



**A Presentation**

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**Little did I know what I was getting into. My boss had just returned from a trip to Brittany, and told me a story of a photographer he'd met while there, who wanted to do a photographic essay of the people behind the scenes in NASA. And he wanted me to be the NASA “monitor” of this activity...just what I needed, one more assignment, and a strange one at that!**

**Having never met Guy-Christophe, I had no idea what he had in mind. In my limited imagination, I envisioned a two-or three-week visit to the Center, followed by the publication of who knows what—a book, perhaps?**

**Here we are now, three years into a five-year agreement! Little did I know how comprehensive a work he had planned.**

**In those three years, I have come to appreciate Guy-Christophe on many levels.**

**First and foremost, he's a tremendously dedicated artist. He does, indeed, see the world a little differently than the average government bureaucrat! His dedication, however, is fueled by a tremendous passion for human spaceflight. He lives and breathes it, almost literally. The depth of that passion is equaled only by his knowledge of the subject.**

**I'd be surprised to find more than a handful of people working for NASA whose knowledge of the history of human spaceflight—ours, that of the Russians, the Chinese, anyone's—equals Guy-Christophe's. He is, indeed, amazingly gifted not only in his knowledge, but also in his understanding of the subject.**

**We have all known people who know much but understand little. This is not the case with Guy-Christophe. His photographs provide eloquent testimony to his passion, knowledge, and understanding.**

**Now, how about his work? I'm normally not bad with words—in fact I delight in them. But I find myself grasping for just the right set of words to describe my reaction and feeling. Invigorated? Surely. Inspired? Without a doubt. In awe? Of course.**

**But the work transcends these feeble descriptions, for what he's done with his photographs is weave a story, a very deep and sensitive story about human spaceflight and exploration. And in doing this, he tells a much larger story about humans and about humanity, and in particular about the explorers in all of us.**

**So his work is not only about NASA and human spaceflight. It's about people who care deeply about what they're doing, and who dedicate their lives to a higher calling—and in that way it becomes everyone's story told through Guy-Christophe's camera lens.**

**It has been my privilege to see it unfold over time, and I look forward to seeing this wonderful tapestry when it is "complete." As it unfolds, it will do an even better job of serving as a communication and education tool for NASA—one to be used by partners everywhere, including schools, museums, and other institutions committed to raising the public's level of awareness of the many glories of human spaceflight.**

**Finally, a word about his "subjects." Having worked at NASA for more than 30 years, I have come to have a deep appreciation for—perhaps affection is a better word—the NASA "family."**

**There is no group of people anywhere more committed to what they're doing. From the technicians on the floor of the shop to the managers at the helm of the ship, this is an incredible, talented, and dedicated group of people.**

**They take great pride in their portrayal in this work, having moved from "mere" subjects to active supporters of the project.**

**Without them, of course, it would not be possible. I believe you will see the love they have for their work in Guy-Christophe's photographs, and that is paired with a love of his work.**

**This symbiosis has allowed the work, like a bird riding the wind currents, to rise higher and higher.**

**Enjoy this wonderful piece of work.**

**Gregory W. Hayes**

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